

Commission set up—The arrangements for wheat purchase—French failure to prevent hoarding—Grave food shortage in Italy—Problems dependent on shipping—Responsibility assumed for feeding and Italy—French fail to play their part—Cavalry obsession Italy—French amazed at our rationing system—French food remarkable—Our food organisation superior to that of belligerents—Value of food control.

CHAPTER XLV

A SYSTEM OF NATIONAL SERVICE

p.

1350

Man-power the first essential in war—Growing shortage in all countries—Ten million casualties—Manifold demands for men—Difficulty of using compulsion in Britain—Our lack of organisation for war—Government control slowly extended—Compulsion unacceptable to industry—System of National Service decided on—War Cabinet proposals—Mr. Neville Chamberlain selected—Labour vetoes industrial compulsion—Initial system to be voluntary—Compulsion held in reserve—Existing machinery—Mr. Chamberlain's task—National compulsion secured by conscription—First steps in the campaign—Mr. Chamberlain's Memorandum—Modifications of scheme by the Cabinet—Recruiting campaign launched—Mr. Chamberlain's statement of appeal—Ministry of National Service Bill—Disappointing results—Difficulties of the Ministry—Muddle and confusion—Meagre response to appeal for volunteers—Ministry not a success—Too much red tape—A giant task—Cost of the Ministry—Strictures of Select Committee—Sir Auckland Geddes takes over—Revised basis of Ministry's activities—Growth of labour difficulties—Smut's visit to South Wales—"Land of My Fathers"—Military waste of man-power in 1917.

CHAPTER XLVI

MILITARY OUTLOOK FOR 1917

1. EXISTING STRATEGICAL PLANS p.

1377

Difficulty of reversing strategical policy—Military staffs assume docility of cannon-fodder—Danube Front closed to us—Sham scheme at Chantilly for Balkan offensive—The Roumanian muddle—Roumanians fall fatal to Russia—Advantages reaped by Central Powers—Danger threatening in Greece—Policy of British Government—An ultimatum to Constantinople—Proposed Italian route to Monastir—Offensive from Salonika abandoned—French and Italian plans unpromising—Allies committed at Chantilly.

2. CONDITIONS OF A SUCCESSFUL OFFENSIVE p.

1390

Break-through hopeless against resolute defence—Biased use
of Army Intelligence—False belief in German
weakness—Real information